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Report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2011

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

In line with General Assembly resolution 59/267, this report provides a synopsis of UNFPA management responses to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and draws attention to specific recommendations directed to the legislative organs of the United Nations system organizations. In 2011, the JIU issued five reports, four of which were relevant to UNFPA. Out of a total of 35 recommendations issued in 2011, there were 16 recommendations that pertained to UNFPA management and five were directed to legislative organs. The present report provides UNFPA management responses to these recommendations, and includes an update of the implementation status of recommendations contained in reports issued by the JIU in 2009 and 2010. In accordance with the wishes of the Executive Board and the emphasis on simplification and harmonization, the present report was prepared in a format jointly developed with UNDP.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, especially those aspects of the JIU reports that have particular relevance to the work of UNFPA.

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I. Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2011

1. The present report provides a summary of UNFPA management responses to relevant recommendations issued by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2011, including management responses, as appropriate, to the recommendations that have been directed for consideration by the UNFPA governing body. For a listing of JIU reports and details of recommendations, please refer to the JIU website (http://www.unjiu.org/en/reports.htm).

2. The four JIU reports relevant to UNFPA are: (a) Review of the medical service in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/1); (b) South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/3); (c) Accountability frameworks in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/5); and (d) Business continuity in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/6).

II. Synopsis and review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

3. Four out of five reports issued by JIU in 2011 include specific recommendations relevant to UNFPA. See annex 1 for a statistical summary of 2011 JIU reports; and annex 2 for a review of the recommendations relevant to UNFPA, presented by the JIU for consideration by the governing body of UNFPA, as well as relevant management responses.

A. Review of the medical service in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/1)

4. This report assesses the manner in which medical services are provided, managed, supported and monitored in the United Nations system, with a view to proposing improvements that would enable the United Nations organizations to enhance staff mobility and increase field presence. As a result of the assessment, and in light of the recommendation on occupational safety and health (OSH), the JIU proposed to the Secretary-General to modify the role and mandate of the Medical Services Division. One key feature of OSH, and in particular OSH medical services, is that such services should remain independent from other administrative/organizational units with direct reporting to the Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee.

5. The report contains seven recommendations, two of which are addressed to legislative bodies, and five pertain to the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations. Pertinent to UNFPA, JIU recommends that the executive heads should appoint focal points in their respective organizations to facilitate the development and implementation of the necessary OSH policies and procedures and should present them to their legislative bodies for adoption (recommendation 1). Furthermore, the legislative bodies should adopt appropriate standards with regard to OSH issues, taking into account and ensuring compatibility with emerging modifications to the minimum operating security standards (recommendation 2).

6. UNFPA welcomes these recommendations and states that the Fund does not directly administer medical services, but uses medical services provided to headquarters staff by the United Nations Secretariat in New York. In the field, this is done on a cost-sharing basis as part of common services. Therefore, UNFPA would look to the United Nations medical services to take the lead in providing appropriate policies, procedures and standards as the basis for future development in this area, and ensuring harmonization across organizations.

B. South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/3)

7. The objective of the review was to assess the existing United Nations institutional arrangements in support of South-South and triangular cooperation, and make recommendations on the ways and means of enhancing system-wide contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation through addressing issues of mandates, frameworks and policies, intergovernmental processes, structures, financing modalities and coordination mechanisms. JIU issued 12 recommendations with nine of them for consideration by the legislative bodies and three directed to the executive heads of the United Nations system organizations. As regards UNFPA, two of the JIU recommendations (numbers 3 and 9) are applicable and both request actions by the Fund's Executive Board.

8. In response to recommendation 3 on the establishment of identifiable and dedicated structures and mechanisms tasked with developing agency-specific corporate policies and support strategies for coordination on South-South and triangular cooperation, UNFPA agrees that agencies need to have a coordination mechanism with dedicated staff, mechanisms and focal points. On the agency-specific corporate strategy, UNFPA agrees that this is a key measure for mainstreaming South-South cooperation into policies.

9. UNFPA has undertaken several steps to support South-South cooperation at both global and country levels. Specifically, UNFPA updated the South-South cooperation strategy in 1997 and adopted the new strategy in 2010, as part of the UNFPA Policies and Procedures Manual. The new strategy focuses on the following medium-term objectives: (a) developing a common understanding of South-South cooperation to enhance consistent strategies across programmes and regions; (b) promoting South-South cooperation initiatives to support the International Conference on Population and Development agenda, capacity-building and technical cooperation; (c) expanding partnerships with countries, and engaging non-traditional actors, including civil society groups; (d) ensuring that resource mobilization addresses emerging development partners and new modalities of cooperation; and (e) strengthening coordination within UNFPA and with other United Nations agencies and global partners around South-South cooperation in both development and humanitarian situations. In addition, the UNFPA strategic plan, 2008-2013, identified South-South cooperation as an important area for organizational attention by including it in its management results framework. An indicator for monitoring South-South cooperation initiatives was also included. Furthermore, in its annual reports to the Executive Board,

UNFPA reports on the progress in the implementation of South-South cooperation initiatives.

10. At country level, several UNFPA-supported country programmes provide evidence of good practices in South-South cooperation, which have been documented, as, for example, in Brazil. The UNFPA country office in Brazil has also mobilized resources from the Government for South-South cooperation initiatives. Furthermore, UNFPA has a long-standing partnership with Partners in Population and Development, an intergovernmental organization created specifically for the purpose of expanding and improving South-South collaboration in the fields of reproductive health, population and development.

11. In regard to recommendation 9, related to securing a percentage of core budget and extrabudgetary resources for financing South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, UNFPA does not recommend legislative action in this area, based on the view that it is not self-evident that the strategy of earmarking a certain level of resources is the best approach to promote effective implementation of South-South cooperation. Rather, UNFPA advocates for integration and mainstreaming of South-South cooperation as the most effective approach. For example, South-South cooperation initiatives at UNFPA typically entail securing resources, advocating alliances, mainstreaming South-South cooperation in development cooperation and implementing South-South cooperation agreements. These initiatives involve a variety of actions that go beyond any predetermined level of resources to tap into wider resources. This includes technical, educational, humanitarian and cultural cooperation; exchanges of knowledge, expertise and technologies; policy development and the sharing of good practices, experiences and lessons learned; bilateral, subregional, regional, interregional or triangular cooperation; and actions by governments, national organizations, international organizations, civil society/non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the private sector.

C. Accountability frameworks in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/5)

12. This report presents a system-wide comparative analysis of the accountability frameworks in the United Nations organizations, existing gaps and good/best practices in developing and implementing accountability frameworks, and an assessment of components of the accountability in organizations that do not possess a formal accountability structure. The report identified 17 benchmarks needed for a robust accountability framework, which together with key pillars are used to measure efficiency, effectiveness, and the impact of accountability frameworks in the organizations. The JIU report contains a total of seven recommendations: two addressed to legislative bodies and five to the executive heads. Four recommendations (numbers 3, 4, 5 and 6) addressed to the executive heads and one recommendation (number 2) to the legislative bodies pertain to UNFPA.

13. Regarding recommendation 2, which refers to legislative bodies taking decisions based on a results-based management (RBM) approach, and ensuring that the necessary

resources are allocated to implement the organizations' strategic plans and RBM, UNFPA initiated the RBM approach in the Fund through its first RBM policy which was adopted in 2000. The RBM policy was updated and approved by the UNFPA Operations Committee in 2011. The Fund has included core competencies in RBM in the staff performance assessment instrument and allocated resources to strengthen staff capacity in RBM. In 2011, training guides and materials for building staff capacity were developed/updated, including an e-training module on RBM basics for all staff. Furthermore, the integrated financial resources framework in the UNFPA strategic plan provides the expected budgetary resources needed to implement the plan. The UNFPA institutional budget 2012-2013, which was approved by the Executive Board at the first regular session 2012, is linked to the management results framework of the strategic plan, including the management results framework output and indicator on RBM and evaluation.

14. Concerning recommendation 3 on ensuring annual reporting of evaluation results, including self-evaluation, to the Executive Board, UNFPA is pleased to report that the necessary procedures have been established and complied with for a complete disclosure of evaluation reports to the public as well as regular reporting on evaluation to a governing body. Following the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards, UNFPA presents reports on the decentralized evaluation of programmes to the public through the Division for Oversight Services (DOS)/Evaluation Branch database, available on the UNFPA website. Likewise, independent evaluation reports are regularly posted on the website[1]. Furthermore, the Evaluation Branch, DOS, presents results of the UNFPA evaluation work, as well as evaluation quality assessment in its biennial report to the Executive Board.

15. The JIU report recommended that executive heads should inform their staff on decisions on disciplinary measures imposed on staff by publishing lists (in annexes to the annual reports and on the website) describing the offence and measures taken while ensuring anonymity of the staff member concerned (recommendation 4). UNFPA agrees with the recommendation and publishes, periodically, via e-mail circulation to all staff as well as on the Intranet, disciplinary measures and related actions taken by the administration following allegations of misconduct.

16. Regarding the mechanisms for recognizing outstanding performance that should be established by the human resources functions (recommendation 5), UNFPA applies a rewards and recognition policy. The policy derives from the UNFPA human resources strategy, and is based on the competency framework as well as the performance appraisal

[1] Every country programme evaluation (CPE) report undergoes a quality check, thus the results of evaluation quality assessments are posted (together with the relevant CPE report) on the UNFPA website at: http://web2.unfpa.org/public/about/oversight/evaluations.

and development (PAD) system which measures staff members' contribution to achieving organizational priorities and recognizes successful performance.

17. With regard to recommendation 6, on ensuring that an information disclosure policy be developed and implemented, UNFPA has been operating under the information disclosure policy which was adopted in 2009. The policy sets out a presumption that all information concerning UNFPA programmes and operations should be available to the public, except for information that is subject to limitations of disclosure as further set out in this policy and the UNFPA oversight policy. To the extent that UNFPA information is already available to the public through various means, including through the UNFPA global website and individual UNFPA country office websites, the policy explains existing principles, practices and procedures. Furthermore, the policy specifies the type of information which should be published on a routine basis on the UNFPA website (e.g., country programme management documents, information about UNFPA operations, etc.) and sets out provisions for processing of information requests. To improve the implementation of this aspect of the policy, UNFPA is currently upgrading its website to allow every country office to publish documentation and financial data at the country level.

D. Business continuity in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/6)

18. This report provides analysis of: (a) business continuity strategies/policies and plans in the United Nations system organizations, and identifies commonalities and differences; (b) experiences and best practices of business continuity implementation; (c) effectiveness of the liaison and coordinating mechanisms among United Nations organizations in regard to emergency preparedness and business continuity; and (d) functioning and staffing of the specialized units in charge of emergency management and business continuity management, including financing frameworks and funding mechanisms.

19. The report contains nine recommendations, one of which is addressed to the legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations, seven are addressed to the executive heads of the organizations, and one to the United Nations Secretary-General in his capacity as the Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Six recommendations (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8) pertain to the UNFPA executive head and one recommendation (number 7) is for action by the Executive Board.

20. UNFPA agreed with the pertinent JIU recommendations and in line with recommendations 1, 2 and 3 has undertaken a number of key steps in 2011 to address issues related to strengthening business continuity management across its operations. The draft business continuity governance model, the policy and the business continuity management practitioner user guide have been developed, and will be presented, in accordance with recommendations 1 and 3 of the report, to the UNFPA Operations Committee for review and approval along with the completed business continuity plans. In line with recommendation 2, the Business Continuity Coordinator responsibility is

currently under the portfolio of the Senior Adviser, Enterprise Risk Management, within the Office of the Executive Director.

21. Concerning recommendation 4, related to the scope of the documented business continuity plan that should include field offices, UNFPA is currently working on the headquarters business continuity plan that is based on the results of a risk assessment which has identified critical business functions and recovery time objectives. Once the headquarters plan has been completed, a formal exercise to develop the field office plans will be undertaken. At present, many field operations have existing plans and these will form the basis of the work to be undertaken. After all plans have been developed and approved, UNFPA will be able to ensure that business continuity planning and implementation will become an essential part of the accountability framework, in accordance with recommendation 6.

22. The JIU report recommends that legislative bodies of the United Nations organizations should, on the basis of organizations' budget proposals, provide the necessary financial and human resources for implementation, monitoring, maintenance and updating of the approved business continuity plans developed on the basis of the relevant policy/strategy of the organizations (recommendation 7). UNFPA supports this and intends to have an annual process in place to continuously update the business continuity management plans and ensure that all plans are reviewed as part of the annual business continuity management activity plan.

23. With regard to recommendation 8 of the report, UNFPA is committed to ensuring that training on business continuity management is provided. The training will form a key component of the embedding of business continuity management across all UNFPA operations and will be implemented after all business continuity plans are approved.

III. Status of UNFPA implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued during 2009-2010

24. In accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/258 requesting JIU to enhance dialogue with participating organizations and thereby strengthen the implementation of its recommendations, JIU requested information on the follow-up to recommendations issued in 2009 and 2010. Annexes 3 and 4 of the present report provide an update of the implementation status of these recommendations.

25. Of the 57 recommendations relevant to and accepted by UNFPA, issued by JIU in 2010, UNFPA has implemented 35 recommendations (61 per cent). Of the 37 relevant recommendations, issued in 2009, 10 were implemented. The latter figures show no progress in comparison with the recommendations issued in 2010, as some pending recommendations from 2009 have a system-wide impact and are currently in the process of implementation. Also, as indicated in annex 3, certain recommendations issued in 2010 are

not relevant to the current UNFPA organizational structure or operations modality and shall be considered as "not relevant".

26. UNFPA is committed to following up on the implementation of the remaining recommendations relevant to UNFPA and to continuing its contribution to the various JIU initiatives in the future.

Annex 1

Summary of reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2011*

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Recommendations directed to the Executive Board
JIU/REP/2011/1	Review of the medical service in the United Nations system	7	2	1
JIU/REP/2011/3	South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system	12	2	2
JIU/REP/2011/5	Accountability frameworks in the United Nations system	7	5	1
JIU/REP/2011/6	Business continuity in the United Nations system	9	7	1
Total JIU recommendations in 2011		35	16	5

* Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2011, but not relevant to UNFPA:
JIU/REP/2011/2: Transparency in the selection and appointment of senior managers in the United Nations Secretariat.
JIU/REP/2011/8: Review of management and administration of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
N.B. Joint Inspection Unit reports relevant to UNFPA, but issued in 2012 (not covered in the present report):
JIU/REP/2011/4: Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations: Status of implementation.
JIU/REP/2011/7: The investigation function in the United Nations system.
JIU/REP/2011/9: Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations.
JIU/REP/2011/10: Staff-management relations within the United Nations.

Annex 2

Review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations in 2011 for consideration by the Executive Board

Recommendations	Management comments
JIU/REP/2011/1: Review of the medical service in the United Nations system	
#2: The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should adopt appropriate standards with regard to occupational safety and health issues, taking into account and ensuring compatibility with emerging modifications to the minimum operating security standards.	UNFPA does not directly administer medical services, but rather uses United Nations Secretariat services in New York – for headquarters staff; and cost shares medical services in the field as part of common services. Therefore, UNFPA would look to United Nations medical services to take the lead in providing an appropriate framework and standards as the basis for future development in this area, and ensuring harmonization across organizations.
JIU/REP/2011/3: South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system	
#3: The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to establish identifiable and dedicated structures, mechanisms and focal points tasked with developing agency-specific corporate policy and support strategy, and ensure coordination on South-South and triangular cooperation within their respective organizations and inter-agencies, through the reallocation of the necessary staff and resources for this purpose, as appropriate.	At global level, the UNFPA strategic plan, 2008-2013, identified South-South cooperation as an important area for the Fund's attention. The Fund developed an organizational strategy on South-South cooperation. The UNFPA annual report to the Executive Board over the last three years provides an update on the Fund's initiatives on South-South cooperation. At country level, several UNFPA-supported country programmes, for example, in Brazil, provide good practices in South-South cooperation which have been documented. In Brazil, UNFPA has also mobilized resources of the Government for the initiatives under the country programme. UNFPA partners with South-South organizations such as Partners in Population and Development whose core mandate is promoting South-South cooperation. As can be seen above, South-South cooperation is part of UNFPA programming. Though at global level there is need for a focal office for South-South cooperation, with coordinating role for the development of the strategy -- more formal structures/focal points would be helpful to further the Fund's work and knowledge sharing in this area.
#9: The legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads to apportion a specific percentage -- not less than 0.5 per cent -- of core budget resources for the promotion of South-South cooperation in their respective areas of competence, in consultation with programme countries; and to agree with donor countries to use a specific portion of	UNFPA uses the South-South cooperation approach in several capacity development initiatives, while it does not track the exact expenditures on this. Thus, the Atlas coding system needs to track expenditures in this area in addition to the existing monitoring of overall results (outcomes/outputs) of the strategic plan. While this information may be useful for management, it will incur an additional reporting burden if this decision is to be implemented.

extrabudgetary resources to finance South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives.	
JIU/REP/2011/5: Accountability frameworks in the United Nations system	
#2: The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations, which have not yet done so, should take decisions based on a results-based management (RBM) approach, and ensure that the necessary resources are allocated to implement the organizations' strategic plans and RBM.	UNFPA initiated the RBM approach in the organization through its first RBM policy adopted in 2000. The RBM policy was updated and approved by the UNFPA Operations Committee in 2011. The Fund has included core competencies in RBM in its performance assessment and allocated resources to strengthen its capacity in RBM. Several resources - training guides and materials -- for building capacity were developed/updated in 2011, including an e-training module on RBM basics for all staff.
JIU/REP/2011/6: Business continuity in the United Nations system	
#7: Legislative bodies of the United Nations organizations should, on the basis of the executive heads' budget proposals, provide the necessary financial and human resources for the implementation, continuous monitoring, maintaining and updating of the approved business continuity plans developed on the basis of the business continuity policy/strategy of the organization.	UNFPA supports this statement, and intends to have an annual process in place to continuously update the business continuity management plans to ensure all plans are reviewed and this will form an integral part of the annual business continuity management activity plan.

Annex 3

Implementation status of relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued in 2010*

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented or ongoing	Partially implemented/ to be started
JIU/REP/2010/1	Environmental profile of the United Nations system organizations: Review of their in-house environmental management policies and practices	12	6**	1	5**
JIU/REP/2010/2	Review of travel arrangements within the United Nations system	9	7	5	2
JIU/REP/2010/3	Ethics in the United Nations system	17	12	5	7
JIU/REP/2010/4	Review of enterprise risk management in the United Nations system: Benchmarking Framework	3	2	0	2
JIU/REP/2010/5	The audit function in the United Nations system	18	14	14	0
JIU/REP/2010/6	Preparedness of United Nations system organizations for the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)	3	3	3	0
JIU/REP/2010/7	Policies and procedures for the administration of trust funds in the United Nations system organizations	13	9	4	5
JIU/REP/2010/8	Inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance in the organizations of the United Nations	10	4	3	1
Total JIU recommendations in 2010		85	57	35	22

* JIU reports issued in 2010 but not relevant to UNFPA:
JIU/REP/2010/9: United Nations corporate partnership: The role and functioning of the Global Compact.
JIU/REP/2010/10: Review of management and administration in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

** Five out of six JIU recommendations in the report JIU/REP/2010/1: Environmental profile of the United Nations system organizations: Review of their in-house environmental management policies and practices, earlier indicated as relevant to UNFPA, after further review appeared to be not relevant given the current UNFPA operations/mandate areas/organizational structure.

Annex 4

Implementation status of relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued in 2009*

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented or ongoing	Partially implemented/ to be started
JIU/REP/2009/5	Towards more coherent United Nations system support to Africa	17	12	10	2
JIU/REP/2009/6	Offshoring in United Nations system organizations: Offshore Service Centres	18	16	0	16
JIU/REP/2009/8	Selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations	13	8	0	8
JIU/REP/2009/9	The role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinators	1	1	0	1
Total JIU recommendations in 2009		49	37	10	27

* JIU reports issued in 2009 but not relevant to UNFPA:
JIU/REP/2009/1: Review of management and administration in the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
JIU/REP/2009/2: Second follow-up to the management review of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
JIU/REP/2009/3: Effectiveness of the International Telecommunication Union regional presence.
JIU/REP/2009/4: Assessment of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
JIU/REP/2009/7: Review of management and administration in the World Food Programme (WFP).
N.B. The variation in the numbers for 2009 recommendations relevant to UNFPA in the present report compared to the previous report, DP/FPA/2010/17 (Part II), is due to a different estimation methodology used in 2010 and 2011, i.e., the recommendations addressed to the Executive Board were not accounted for as part of the total UNFPA-related recommendations in DP/FPA/2010/17 (Part II).